

ICT Policy Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin

School Name: Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin

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Principal: Seán Ó Bhriain

ICT coordinator: Helen Ní Chianaigh

Mission Statement

As well as being an important educational resource, the ability to use ICT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society.

“Our aim is to produce learners (pupils and teachers) who are confident and effective users of ICT”.

We intend to achieve that aim by:

- 1) Teaching ICT skills as a separate subject
- 2) Ensuring that ICT is incorporated into all subjects on the curriculum
- 3) Helping all children to use ICT with purpose and enjoyment
- 4) Helping all children to develop the necessary skills to exploit ICT

Rationale

Why does our school require ICT?

- The pupils in our school need to be IT literate.
- We want to provide the best possible education for all our pupils.
- We want to provide a powerful and up to date teaching resource for all our teachers.
- ICT will be used for more effective administration.
- ICT will be used to help children in need of learning support.
- ICT will be used to provide more effective communication with parents.
- ICT will be used to communicate with teachers and pupils in other schools.
- ICT will be used to prepare children for life in a technologically advanced workplace.

To what use will ICT be put?

- School Administration-pupil details, standard letters, newsletters, book lists etc.
- Research software, e.g. Encarta Encyclopedia.
- Drill and Practice software: e.g. English, Maths, Geography
- Adventure games e.g. Granny's Garden, Who Stole the Book, etc.
- Word Processing and printing of children's work.
- Research on the internet.
- Communication via email.
- Storage of Records e.g. Micra-T & Sigma-T Results. (To start this year 2014)
- Software for Special Needs pupils e.g. Word Shark, Number Shark.
- Software for more able pupils.

Advantages of ICT:

- The most up to date information may be accessed speedily.
- Presentation of work is greatly enhanced.
- Pupils with special needs are greatly empowered through use of ICT.
- The computer has endless patience when used for drill and practice applications.
- The computer can allow for individual differences.
- All children find computers a fascinating source of learning.

Disadvantages of ICT:

- There are major financial implications in equipping and upgrading a school with ICT.
- Researching software and lesson plans is very time consuming.
- Curriculum overload is an ever present problem.
- Introduction of ICT to a school greatly increases the workload and thereby the stress levels of the teachers.
- Teachers need to continually update their ICT skills-some teachers lack confidence using ICT.

Summary of School Audit

Current Hardware:

- The school is equipped with ten interactive whiteboards.
- The Promethean Activboard comes with Activprimary 2 and Activprimary 3 software, Activpens. These transform the classroom into an interactive learning environment. The interactive whiteboards enable anything that can be seen or done on a computer screen to be projected onto a whiteboard. It is possible to hide, reveal or highlight text and images to stimulate discussion; encourage active participation through measuring tools, interactive rulers or protractors; and engage the senses with sounds, colours and videos. The software allows access to thousands of resources and sample lessons.
- The Activpens write like pens with the added functionality of a mouse.
- The 13 teachers each have a laptop.
- There is a computer and a printer in the Secretary's office (soon to be replaced)
- There is a computer, a printer and a scanner in the Principal's office.
- There are 8 functioning laptops in the computer trolley
- There are 15 Microsoft tablets (we hope to add to this in 2014)
- 1 Dell Tablet

Current Usage of ICT for Pupils:

- Each class has a timetabled slot for use of school computers
- Teachers avail of these computers for various uses including project work/research, scratch programme and typing work
- Current usage of software includes pre-reading and early reading work; pre-number and early number work; mathematical application; development of thinking and problem solving skills; word processing, desktop publishing; use of multimedia encyclopedia and typing skills; internet work (in the classroom)

Teaching Staff

Total Staff: 14

Number familiar with ICT: 7

Number competent to use ICT in teaching: 5

Number in need of training: 13

Number willing to be trained: 13

Most appropriate form of training:.

ICT Co-Ordination:

Currently Helen Ní Chianaigh holds the post for ICT Coordination.

Special Needs: Each learning support teacher has a laptop but no access to interactive whiteboards. We recognise the potential of ICT to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils with special needs. We aim to have children with specific writing, reading and numeracy needs using ICT to provide alternative and complementary educational experiences by the end of 2014.

Maintenance:

At present Brendan Boyle from Clone IT holds the contract for ICT maintenance in the school. A book is left in the staffroom where teachers can report any problems they have with ICT in their classrooms. Brendan makes two hour visits to the school every fortnight and carries out the necessary maintenance as well as improving the network within the school. Brendan is also available outside of these hours for more urgent requirements. Brendan's contract expires at the end of June 2014.

Health and Safety Aspects:

Dedicated power points have been installed for all computers, and fused plugs used..

With Broadband there will be free internet access for everybody using school premises – the school has an Internet Acceptable Use Policy in place.

The Schools' Goals Regarding ICT

Technology Integration:

Our long-term aim that technology be used to support the teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum and in all classrooms is almost realized.

What should be taught in ICT to pupils in our school?

Junior/Senior Infants:

- Names of computer parts: monitor, keyboard, mouse, printer etc.
- Basic care of a computer.
- Manipulating the mouse using software for painting games, jigsaws etc.
- Finding letters and basic words.
- Reading programmes.
- Using educational software to reinforce class work.

1st & 2nd Class:

- Revision of computer parts.
- Turning on and off a computer.
- Opening & closing files.
- Use of space bar & return keys.
- Using shift key for Capital letters.
- Using Microsoft Word to type a few sentences.
- Changing font type and size.
- Saving to file.
- Using Clip Art.
- Using educational software to reinforce class work.

3rd & 4th Class:

- Revision of work done in 2nd class.
- Typing practice.
- Word Processing-correcting mistakes, spellcheck, etc.
- Formatting text.
- Saving to computer
- Microsoft Excel: creating spreadsheets; using tab key; alphabetical order; autosum etc.
- Using appropriate educational software to reinforce class work.

5th & 6th Class:

- Revision of work done in middle standards.
- Formatting text-borders, margins, tables.
- Using the Internet under supervision.
- Sending E-Mails under supervision.
- Using appropriate educational software to reinforce class work.

Children receiving Learning Support:

- Using literacy & phonic software
- Using Maths software.

Hardware Purchase:

ICT co-ordinator Helen Ní Chianaigh will be responsible for purchase of appropriate hardware upon approval of the Board of Management.

Software Purchase:

Helen Ní Chianaigh in conjunction with the Principal and relevant staff members will be responsible for reviewing and recommending purchase of appropriate software.

School website:

The school hosts a website at www.gaelscoilchillmhantain.ie

School newsletters and other news items will regularly be added.

School policies that are relevant to parents will also be added to this site.

Children's class work is published using their first name only for identification purposes.

Class photographs are published without names with the relevant permission. In exceptional circumstances and with permission of the child names are published.

Created	
Reviewed	February 2015
To be reviewed	February 2018